

# **Report**

## **On Affairs Within Archdiocese of Agana**

1/5/2015

**Concerned Catholics of Guam, Inc.**

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**January 4, 2015**

## **Introduction**

The Concerned Catholics of Guam, Inc. (CCOG), was established as a non-profit organization to assist the Archdiocese of Agana in addressing a division among the Faithful within the Catholic Church on Guam.

The officers and board of directors of the organization are community leaders and devout Catholics who decided to organize to help the Church on Guam and the region via a bonafide corporate structure, providing an official forum for dialogue among the Catholic clergy and laity of Guam and the region to discuss issues of concern and to work out solutions as best as they could provide.

CCOG saw its beginning on the impetus of these community leaders, strong in their Catholic faith, after witnessing alleged misuse of Archdiocesan funds received from the Faithful on Guam; the cavalier use of the names of certain members of the Clergy without consulting them to put blame or responsibility on them; and the destruction of the reputation of two priests, held in high regard by the Faithful on Guam.

The pronouncements of the Archbishop of Agana and the actions, statements, and omissions from the Archdiocesan leadership, i.e., the Vicar General and the Chancellor, on matters relating to parish affairs; on the punishments handed down to members of the clergy; on the practices of the Neocatechumenal Way vis a vis traditions that have been practiced by the Faithful in the parishes of Guam among other matters of concern to the Faithful, have caused confusion, anxiety, and frustration among the Catholics on Guam and the region.

Recognizing the divisiveness that exists within the Catholic Church on Guam that has been festering for almost twenty years since the advent of the Neocatechumenal Way on Guam, the founding members of CCOG were compelled to organize so the Laity and the Clergy could have a forum to discuss their issues and to seek assistance and resolutions to these problems, as seeking answers and assistance from the Archdiocese have been misleading, unfulfilling, and not in compliance with Canon Law or the Magisterium of the Church, the latter being what many have found out later.

The Archbishop of Agana and the leadership of the Archdiocese have been allegedly secretive in its financial management of the Archdiocese's treasury. They have been negligent in their pastoral care of the Faithful, pitting the practices of the Neocatechumenal Way against the cultural traditions of how the Faithful on Guam through generations have practice their faith and worship of God the Father and of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the detriment of unity and peace among the Faithful, fostering doubt on what is truly right in how we should worship God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is incumbent upon CCOG to make known this divisiveness and to seek remedies per Canon Law Title I, No. 212, §2-§3.

Therefore, CCOG puts forth these issues of concern hoping that the assistance of higher ecclesiastical authority can take definitive action to restore harmony, unity, peace and love within our Church on Guam and the region.

## **I. Clergy Mistreatment**

### **A. Father Paul Gofigan Pastor of Santa Barbara Parish, Dededo, Guam**

The removal of Father Paul Gofigan, in July 2013, as pastor of the largest parish on Guam came as a shock to the Catholics of Guam. Fr. Gofigan was well-respected and loved by his parishioners.

The parish of Santa Barbara, Dededo, especially was shocked to learn of their pastor's disobedience in following an order from the Vicar General to release an employee of the parish who is a registered sex offender who was convicted of his crime over 30 years ago. The order was issued a couple of years before it was "discovered" that the employee was still "working" for the parish.

The parishioners of Santa Barbara were further shaken to learn that because of this "disobedience", Fr. Gofigan was alleged to have put the children of Santa Barbara school in danger, and thus, was immediately removed from his duties as pastor.

Later it was learned that the removal of Fr. Gofigan was unfounded and illegitimate per the precepts of Canon Law, and that Fr. Gofigan did in fact follow the order from the Vicar General, two years earlier when it was issued, but the former employee continued to volunteer to help around the parish rectory, without compensation. The order from the Vicar General did not ban the person in question from volunteering to help as an active parishioner.

The damage to Fr. Gofigan's reputation and character, however, had been done.

On July 16, 2013, Father Gofigan was called to the Chancery and was told that he has to resign as Pastor, or face “a more painful and arduous closure” to his call for voluntary resignation, for allegedly disobeying the order to dismiss a parish rectory employee and registered sex offender and ex-convict who was dubbed “a threat to the welfare of the children” at nearby Santa Barbara School.

Afterwards, the following facts and the truth were discovered:

- (1) Fr. Gofigan had in fact dismissed the employee two years earlier when directed by the Vicar General. That former employee later volunteered to continue working without compensation, helping around the parish rectory; and
- (2) there never was any proof that the individual in question (Mr. Joseph Lastimoza) was in fact a threat to the children at the nearby Catholic school.

Father Gofigan requested for a written document of the charges prompting his dismissal and at the same time asserted his right to defend himself.

Instead Fr. Gofigan, upon returning to the rectory at Santa Barbara after his meeting with the Archbishop that afternoon, found the locks changed, and was advised by the newly-appointed parish administrator that he had to vacate the premises. Further, his name was removed from the parish bulletin as a celebrant of some of the Masses that following Sunday.

The canonical procedures for the removal of pastors were violated by Archbishop Apuron concerning prior counseling and due process. Canon nos. 1740-1752.

### **--Defamation of Character**

The Archbishop, at a retreat-conference of priests of the Archdiocese of Agana, held in October 2013 at Tagaytay, Philippines, publicly defamed Fr. Paul Gofigan by insinuating that Fr. Gofigan was probably having homosexual trysts with Mr. Joseph Lastimoza, the registered sex-offender and parishioner who continued to work around the parish rectory as a volunteer.

In making these statements about Fr Gofigan, he not only disparaged Fr. Gofigan’s reputation, but moreover hurt the reputation and family of Mr. Joseph Lastimoza.

Fr. Gofigan vehemently denied this insinuation and demanded an apology from the Archbishop. None was ever given to the best of CCOG’s knowledge to date. Father Gofigan has filed a case against Archbishop Apuron with the Vatican.

The case of Fr. Paul Gofigan was documented in a book, titled: Target Equals Priest, which can be made available.

### **--Chronology of Events**

A chronology of events is listed here below summarizing the removal of Fr. Paul Gofigan from Santa Barbara Parish:

#### **July 16, 2013.**

a. Fr. Paul Gofigan is called to a meeting with Archbishop Anthony Apuron and Msgr. David C. Quitugua, the Vicar General. At the meeting he is read a letter<sup>1</sup>:

- accusing him of disobeying an order from the Vicar General to terminate an employee two years earlier;
- accusing him of causing *“grave harm to the parish...especially the youth”* and creating *“a lasting and potential threat to the safety and well-being”* of his parishioners and staff;
- demanding his immediate resignation as pastor of Santa Barbara parish or face a more *“arduous and painful closure to your assignment”*;
- telling him to go *“look for a benevolent bishop willing to accept you.”*

b. According to Fr. Gofigan, upon returning to his office, Fr. Gofigan finds himself locked out of his office, the Archbishop having ordered the locks changed while he was at the meeting with the Archbishop.

#### **July 17, 2013.**

The very next day Fr. Paul Gofigan is officially removed as pastor of his parish by an *Aviso*<sup>2</sup> from the Chancery appointing Rev. Father Dan Bien as the Parochial Administrator of Santa Barbara Church, upon which Fr. Gofigan is then:

- removed from the schedule of presiders, effectively censuring him without due process; and
- told to vacate the rectory with no alternative residence provided.

#### **July 22, 2013.**

a. Fr. Gofigan writes to Archbishop Apuron stating his rejection of the Archbishop's demand that he resign and asserts his canonical rights for basic due process, all of which had been heretofore violated by the Archbishop<sup>3</sup>.

b. The Chancery releases a public statement to the media<sup>4</sup>:

- accusing Fr. Gofigan of disobeying *“a directive from the Archbishop”*;
- implying that the subject employee was and is a danger to children: *“A school full of children is in very close proximity to the parish.”*

**July 28, 2013.**

Fr. Gofigan writes Archbishop Apuron and requests a copy of his decree of removal and states his intention to seek “recourse to the author of the decree in accordance with C. 1734.1 and names his advocate: Fr. Adolfo N. Dacanay, S.J.”<sup>5</sup>

**August 2, 2013.**

The Vicar General writes Father Gofigan saying that there is no decree of removal because he was never removed and that the letter of July 16, 2013 demanding his resignation was only an attempt to “*persuade the pastor to resign.*”<sup>6</sup>

**August 20, 2014.**

Archbishop Apuron writes Father Gofigan:

- again accusing him of disobeying his 2011 instruction to terminate the employee;
- again accusing the employee of being a danger to parishioners;
- again accusing the employee of specifically being a danger to children;
- claiming that there is no guarantee that the employee, who went to prison in 1981 for sexual assault, will never commit sexual assault again, thus justifying his accusation that the man is still a danger;
- again demands Fr. Gofigan’s resignation as pastor (even though he was already officially replaced with an administrator, effectively removing Fr. Gofigan as pastor and making a letter of resignation unnecessary).<sup>7</sup>

Relevant facts to consideration with regard to Fr. Gofigan’s removal as pastor of Santa Barbara parish, Dededo:

- Fr. Gofigan produced his letter<sup>8</sup> to the employee terminating his employment at Santa Barbara parish dated October 26, 2011, proving that he had in fact obeyed Archbishop Apuron’s order when it was given;
- The subject employee in fact worked previously at Santa Barbara parish over a period of three years as a condition of his parole with the knowledge of Archbishop Apuron and long before Fr. Gofigan was made pastor of the parish<sup>9</sup>.
- Archbishop Apuron did NOT consider the man, then only recently released from prison, to be all the dangers he makes him out to be 13 years later as the reason for removing Fr. Gofigan as pastor of Santa Barbara parish.

- Archbishop Apuron initially violates the canons (1740-1752) relative to the removal of a pastor in his demand for the resignation of Fr. Gofigan.<sup>10</sup>
- Having violated specific canons and having been caught doing it, Archbishop Apuron backtracks saying his initial demand for resignation was only an attempt to “paternally persuade” Fr. Gofigan to resign (as required by canon law).

### **August 12, 2013.**

As later noted in the official Decree of Removal<sup>11</sup>, Archbishop Apuron initiates the removal process according to canonical procedure (a *de facto* admission that he previously violated the procedure) by convoking the required consultation with two pastors, Rev. Msgr. Brigido Arroyo and Rev. Fr. Jose Alberto Rodriguez.

### **August 20, 2013.**

Fr. Adolfo Dacanay files with Archbishop Apuron a Motion:<sup>12</sup>

- to restore Fr. Gofigan to his office as pastor;
- to clear his name; and
- to repair the damage done to his reputation

### **September 10, 2013.**

Archbishop Apuron ignores the Motion from Fr. Dacanay and informs Fr. Gofigan that he is “proceeding with the removal process observing the canonical norms”.<sup>13</sup>

*(Note: Obviously, Archbishop Apuron did not follow canonical norms given that on July 17, 2013, he officially replaced Fr. Gofigan with an administrator. An administrator cannot be appointed to a parish unless the pastor’s office is vacant. Thus, Archbishop Apuron upon appointing the administrator de facto admits that he had already removed Fr. Gofigan from his office, albeit illegally).*

### **September 13, 2013.**

Fr. Gofigan writes Archbishop Apuron acknowledging receipt of his September 10<sup>th</sup> letter and states that since he is only now proceeding with the removal that it is apparent that he has not yet been removed from this office as pastor and he be restored to his office as pastor “with all the consequences that follow therefrom.”<sup>14</sup>

### **November 11, 2013.**



Fr. Gofigan's advocate, Fr. A.N. Dacanay, S. J., provides Archbishop Apuron with a copy of "the appeal of Rev. Paul Gofigan in relation to his removal as Pastor of Santa Barbara Parish."<sup>15</sup>

In the appeal, Fr. Dacanay:

- states that "*the charge against Fr. Gofigan has become an elastic concept*" (a reference to Archbishop Apuron's mutating the charge against Fr. Gofigan from
- refusing to obey his order to terminate an employee, to refusing to obey his order to terminate a "*de facto*" employee);
- details the "*procedural lapses in the manner the Archbishop acted*";
- criticizes the Vicar General's August 2<sup>nd</sup> assertion that Fr. Gofigan had no right to appeal his removal since he was not removed (even though he was);
- calls the Archbishop's actions against Fr. Gofigan "*a canonical procedure that has gone awry*";
- accuses Archbishop Apuron of: 1) mangling canonical procedures; 2) ignoring provision of the Code; 3) making a feeble attempt to correct the bungled process; 4) violating the rights of a pastor; and 5) ruining his good name.

He concludes by stating: "*The concerns raised by the Archbishop could have been accomplished even without the bungled attempt at removal, therefore one really wonders what is the real purpose behind the move.*"

### **November 12, 2013.**

Archbishop Apuron officially decrees the removal of Fr. Gofigan "from his office as pastor of Santa Barbara Church (three months after he de facto removed him by the appointment of a parochial administrator and locking him out of his office)."<sup>16</sup>

### **December 6, 2013.**

Fr. Gofigan writes Archbishop Apuron confronting him about remarks he (Apuron) made at recent clergy retreat in Tagaytay, Philippines wherein Archbishop Apuron heavily infers that Fr. Gofigan and Joseph Lastimoza, the subject employee, were involved in a homosexual relationship.

Archbishop Apuron alleges that Fr. Gofigan had gone so far as to construct a "*stairway up to his room*" so that the employee could visit him "*in the middle of the night with cases of beer and what not and stay there until the early morning.*" (The comments were recorded). Fr. Gofigan calls these remarks "slanderous and defamatory" and demands "both a retraction and an apology in writing."<sup>17</sup>

### **January 13, 2014.**

Fr. Gofigan again writes Archbishop Apuron reminding him of his (Gofigan's) demand for a retraction and apology which was "not provided" and advises that the Archbishop: *"Your failure to retract those slanderous and defamatory statements leaves me no choice but to take steps to rectify your wrong and to salvage my name, which you have gone out of your way to ruin."*

Fr. Gofigan concludes by giving the Archbishop until 14 January 2014 to make the requested retraction in writing and if he (Apuron) fails to do so Fr. Gofigan *"will take action (including legal action) to salvage my name."*<sup>18</sup>

#### **January 14, 2014.**

A meeting is arranged between Archbishop Apuron and Fr. Gofigan at which, according to Fr. Gofigan, Archbishop Apuron did not apologize but only suggested that "we cool off" and "let the canonical process run its course." Gofigan advises Apuron: "I will continue to press my case both canonically and civilly."<sup>19</sup>

#### **January 16, 2013.**

Fr. Gofigan writes Archbishop Apuron that there was no apology yet from Archbishop Apuron and that:

- there was only an excuse for the defamatory remarks;
- that Archbishop Apuron meant to *"ruin and defame my name and that of Mr. Lastimoza"*; and
- all in an attempt to "bolster and justify your act in removing me on July 16th as
- pastor of Santa Barbara."<sup>20</sup>

Fr. Gofigan was later assigned as a "priest in residence" to St. Anthony's Church in Tamuning where he still awaits the outcome of his appeal.

With regards to Joseph Lastimoza, the subject employee:

- Mr. Lastimoza was convicted of rape and manslaughter of an adult woman in 1981.
- He went to prison and was paroled in 1999.
- He served out the terms of his parole as a maintenance man at Santa Barbara Church from 03/30/99 to 03/29/02 without any objection from Archbishop Apuron.<sup>21</sup>
- By his own admission, it was because of his association with Fr. Gofigan that Mr. Lastimoza returned to the Church, and as a married man and father of two, had been living a quiet, faith-filled life and one exemplary of the success of the corrections system. All of this was shattered by Archbishop Apuron on July 16, 2013

and thereafter due to the continued statements about Mr. Lastimoza being a danger to parishioners and children by Archbishop Apuron.

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Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Letter from Archbishop Apuron to Fr. Paul Gofigan. July 16, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/221840769/ApuronvsGofigan20130716ArchbishopAnthonySablanApuronlettertoFrPaulGofigan>

<sup>2</sup>Official Aviso. July 17, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251200447/ApuronvsGofigan2013071704AVISO>

<sup>3</sup>Letter from Fr. Paul Gofigan to Archbishop Apuron. July 22, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251201487/ApuronvsGofigan20130722GofiganRefusestoResign>

<sup>4</sup>Archdiocese Statement Regarding Fr. Paul Gofigan. July 22, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/222412242/ApuronvsGofigan20130722ChanceryPressRelease>

<sup>5</sup>Email from Fr. Paul Gofigan to Archbishop Apuron. July 28, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/221537908/ApuronvsGofigan20130728RequestforCopyofDecree>

<sup>6</sup>Letter from Msgr. David C. Quitugua to Fr. Paul Gofigan. August 02, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251201731/ApuronvsGofigan20130802VicarGeneralLettertoFrGofigan>

<sup>7</sup>Letter from Archbishop Apuron to Fr. Paul Gofigan. August 20, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/221843293/ApuronvsGofigan20130820ArchbishopAnthonySablanApuronlettertoFrPaulGofigan>

<sup>8</sup>Letter from Fr. Paul Gofigan to Joseph Lastimoza. October 26, 2011  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251202065/ApuronvsGofigan20111026TerminationLetter>

<sup>9</sup>Community Service Record of Joseph Lastimoza. 03/30/99 to 03/29/02  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/244788132/ApuronvsGofiganLastimozaCommunityServiceRecords>

<sup>10</sup>Code of Canon Law on the Removal of Pastors  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251202234/ApuronvsGofiganCodeofCanonLawRemovalofaPastor>

<sup>11</sup>Decree of Removal of Fr. Paul Gofigan as Pastor of Santa Barbara Church. Archbishop Apuron. November 12, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/223636939/ApuronvsGofigan20131112DecreeofRemoval>

<sup>12</sup>Motion to Restore Fr. Paul Gofigan to his office as pastor. Submitted by Fr. A.N. Dacanay, S.J., August 20, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/223638354/ApuronvsGofigan20130820Motiontorevoke decreeofremoval>

<sup>13</sup>Letter from Archbishop Apuron to Fr. Paul Gofigan. September 10, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/223637635/ApuronvsGofigan20130910LetterApuronto Gofigan>

<sup>14</sup>Letter from Fr. Paul Gofigan to Archbishop Apuron. September 13, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251202567/ApuronvsGofigan20130913LetterGofiganto Apuron>

<sup>15</sup>The appeal of Rev. Paul Gofigan in relation to his removal as Pastor of Santa Barbara Parish. Submitted by Fr. A.N. Dacanay, S.J. November 07, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251202683/ApuronvsGofigan20131107AppealofRevPgo figan>

<sup>16</sup>Decree of Removal of Fr. Paul Gofigan as Pastor of Santa Barbara Church. Archbishop Apuron. November 12, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/223636939/ApuronvsGofigan20131112DecreeofRemov al>

<sup>17</sup>Letter from Fr. Paul Gofigan to Archbishop Apuron. December 06, 2013  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/229679412/ApuronvsGofigan20131206GofiganLetterto Apuron>

<sup>18</sup>Letter from Fr. Paul Gofigan to Archbishop Apuron. January 13, 2014  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251202902/ApuronvsGofigan20140113GofigantoApuro n>

<sup>19</sup>Letter from Fr. Paul Gofigan to Archbishop Apuron. January 14, 2014  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251202907/ApuronvsGofigan20140114GofiganPressRel ease>

<sup>20</sup>Letter from Fr. Paul Gofigan to Archbishop Apuron. January 16, 2014  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251202911/ApuronvsGofigan20140116GofigantoApuro n>

<sup>21</sup>Community Service Record of Joseph Lastimoza. 03/30/99 to 03/29/02  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/244788132/ApuronvsGofiganLastimozaCommunityServi ceRecords>

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**B. Monsignor James Benavente**  
**Pastor (de facto) of the Dulce Nombre De Maria Cathedral-Basilica Parish**  
**Agana, Guam**

The following year (on July 25, 2014), Msgr. James Benavente was removed from his position as Rector (de facto Pastor) of the Cathedral-Basilica (and the parish of the Dulce Nombre De Maria, Agana); and from his position as Director of Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Agana.

Msgr. Benavente sought in writing the charges levied against him which prompted his immediate removal as pastor of the Agana parish and Director of Catholic Cemeteries. Archbishop Apuron agreed to that request. The main reason was “financial mismanagement” of the funds entrusted to him (Msgr. James Benavente).

Msgr. Benavente is also a member of the Archdiocesan Finance Council which decided not to approve the alienation of the Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Yona, Guam to the corporation overseeing the seminary, whose officials are leaders and members of the Neocatechumenal Way, including Archbishop Apuron; and Giuseppe and Claudia Gennarini, high level officials in the Neocatechumenal Way, who are based in New Jersey.

Canonical procedures for the removal of pastors (though Msgr. Benavente is also considered the rector of the Cathedral-Basilica, the seat of the Archbishop and the center of the Archdiocese of Agana) were again violated in the case of Msgr. Benavente as was the case with Fr. Paul Gofigan.

The Archbishop announced to the secular media that the removal of Msgr. Benavente was prompted by financial mismanagement of funds entrusted to him as a member of the Archdiocesan Finance Council and as the Director of Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Agana.

Five highly-respected clergymen who are members of the Presbyterial Council publicly demanded a clarification from the Archbishop when he stated that he (Archbishop) had consulted and obtain the concurrence of his Presbyterial Council before removing Monsignor Benavente. The clergymen said they were not consulted. There was no response (at least not made public) to the priests’ demand for clarification from the Archbishop.

The Faithful, in reading and hearing only one side of the story surrounding the removal of Msgr. Benavente, have become weary and doubtful of pronouncements and announcements coming from the Archdiocese on such issues, wondering who is actually telling the truth; though it seems from the public uproar the scale is tipping in favor of the laity helping the Archdiocese who have effectively accused the Archbishop of making false and misleading statements on such sensitive matters of concern to the Faithful and with the clergy whose reputation and integrity have been besmirched with impunity by the Archbishop, the Vicar General and the Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Agana.

**C. Deacon Stephen Wm. Martinez**  
**Assigned to the Parish of Dulce Nombre De Maria, Agana, Guam**

On October 24, 2014, Deacon Stephen Martinez (Sexual Abuse Response Coordinator for the Archdiocese – SARC, previous to that date), was removed from his position as SARC after advising the Archbishop that as the SARC, he, Deacon Martinez, is to be notified immediately of any issues relating to sexual abuse involving the clergy and religious of the Archdiocese of Agana.

Deacon Martinez learned through the news that a priest incardinated in the Archdiocese of Agana had a record of sexual abuse in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, and that the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in 2011 had contacted “Guam church officials” to advise them about the sexual abuse allegations against said priest. Deacon Martinez was surprised that he was never contacted about this.

Knowing about this priest’s sexual abuse record (Father John Wadeson), and not saying anything about it to the SARC is the equivalent of concealing the sexual abuse record of this priest, when it should have been reported to the SARC as required by the Sexual Abuse Policy of the Archdiocese of Agana.

The subsequent removal of Deacon Martinez as the SARC for the Archdiocese lays grave suspicion on just what were the intentions of the Archbishop and other “church officials” who knew about and kept quiet.

***--Threat of Interdiction if Deacon Martinez Continued as a Member of CCOG***

On December 17, 2014, Deacon Martinez was advised by the Archbishop in a letter that he was being stripped of his faculties as a Deacon for being a member of the Concerned Catholics of Guam, Inc. Initially, the interdict (suspension of the faculties of the Deacon) was to take effect on December 17, 2014.

However, the very next day, Deacon Martinez was given another letter stating his interdiction (suspension) will go into effect on January 19, 2015, unless he resigned from CCOG.

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## **II. Stewardship and Leadership**

### **A. The National Museum of the Dulce Nombre De Maria Cathedral-Basilica**

As a result of the dissolution of the Archdiocesan Development Group (on July 25, 2014 by Decree Prot. 2014-40 from the Archbishop), which oversaw the National Museum of the Dulce Nombre De Maria Cathedral-Basilica, many of the Faithful were concerned that before the museum was open to the public it was closed. It has been more than five months since the closure of the museum, with no directive from the Archdiocese on whether the museum will open or not. This has caused anxiety among the Faithful, and concern among the donors to the museum who are wondering if their contributions have been for naught.

As a result of the dissolution of the Archdiocesan Development Group, the responsibility will be maintained by the new Rector of the Cathedral Basilica, Monsignor David Quitugua, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese, to preserve the artifacts in the museum and continue its mission, if he so desired.

At a visitation in the parish of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, Agana Heights, the Archbishop was asked by the congregation gathered why the museum project was apparently abandoned. Archbishop Apuron responded that the museum at the Cathedral-Basilica was closed by Monsignor James Benavente. This statement is false.

Msgr. Benavente did not close the museum, but was removed from his duties of overseeing the projects under the Cathedral-Basilica of which one was the National Museum. Msgr. Benavente was working to open the museum when he was relieved of his duties at the Cathedral-Basilica.

It was Msgr. David Quitugua, the new Rector of the Cathedral-Basilica who decided not to open the museum. This was clearly stated by the Chancellor, Father Adrian Cristobal, when he was interviewed on this subject by a television news reporter, which was aired on KUAM-TV News.

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## **B. Two Seminaries**

### **TO THE APOSTOLIC VISITORS TO THE ARCHDIOCESE OF AGANA ON THE MATTER OF TWO SEMINARIES FOR GUAM**

Submitted by Tim Rohr  
[timrohr.guam@gmail.com](mailto:timrohr.guam@gmail.com)

Upon request by CCOG, Inc.  
because of his extensive research into this matter  
(Edited for this Report)

*December 28, 2014, Hagatna, Guam*



Recently, Archbishop Apuron returned from a photo-op with Pope Francis, boasting about how pleased the Holy Father was that Guam had two seminaries.

First, Guam does NOT have two seminaries. It has one seminary (and even that's questionable) and a boarding house for what Archbishop Apuron believes are disobedient misfits. The young men in the boarding house, an abandoned Carmelite monastery, have been sent there to shut both them and us up.

In August of 2013, I made the public aware<sup>1</sup> about the plight of Junee Valencia, a young man who desired to serve the Archdiocese of Agana as a diocesan priest, but who was forced by Archbishop Apuron to attend the local Redemptoris Mater Seminary (RMS) instead of being sent to a traditional and accredited seminary in the states like almost every diocesan priest from Guam before him. Junee's objection to attending RMS was that it was a decidedly Neocatechumenal Way formation. This was obvious by what it had already produced since it was founded in 1999.

My blog, "JungleWatch", brought an unwanted light to the problem. Archbishop Apuron had been able to fund the RMS with donations from the people of Guam because they had been led to believe that the RMS was "a seminary for Guam", a phrase which led the people here naturally to believe that the RMS was a diocesan seminary where diocesan priests could be formed and readied for the priesthood.

However, not only was it apparent that the RMS was producing something very different than traditional diocesan priests, its academic credentials began to be questioned. Some noticed that there was no academic



handbook, no authentic list of faculty, and credentialed only by Archbishop Apuron's saying that it was affiliated with the Lateran, though no document was ever proffered.

This lack of academic credential came to the fore when a young man, Aaron Quitugua, like Junee before him, petitioned Archbishop Apuron to sponsor him to Mount Angel Seminary in Oregon. Archbishop Apuron, through his chancellor, Fr. Adrian Cristobal, advised Aaron that he could not be sent to the Oregon seminary due to "a lack of financial resources."

Aaron volunteered to take care of his own expenses if only Archbishop Apuron would sponsor him. Aaron was then told by Fr. Adrian Cristobal<sup>2</sup>: ***"I regret to inform you that your request to have the Archdiocese sponsor you at Mt. Angel Seminary is denied. In the event that you do have a change of direction in this matter and decide to follow the course of action that we require, please fell (sic) free to contact me."***

The "course of action" which "we require" was formation solely at the Redemptoris Mater Seminary. At this moment it became clear to all that to be a priest in the Archdiocese of Agana, one had to be formed in the Neocatechumenal Way. There was no option.

I published several blog posts on the matter, but the following post, published on October 23, 2014, best tells the story. In addition there are several links within the story leading to substantiating material. In short, Archbishop Apuron not only did NOT want a second seminary, he specifically did NOT want a DIOCESAN seminary. He only "erected" the second seminary after I exposed the real nature of the RMS (constituted ONLY to form priests in the Neocatechumenal Way). He has since privately mocked this "second" seminary and its seminarians. Yet, he went to the Holy Father and bragged about having two seminaries.

Here's the post:

### **--You're Welcome**

*"Since 1999, the Catholics of Guam had been told that the Redemptoris Mater Seminary (RMS) was 'for Guam'. In fact, a 2010 publication<sup>3</sup> celebrating itself declared the seminary to be "A Miracle for Guam." In the publication we are told that the seminary was both diocesan and missionary. There's nothing unique about that, the Church by its nature is 'missionary'.*

*"So, no problem. The people of Guam continued to pour lots of money into the seminary thinking all the time that it was their seminary and it was producing priests for Guam. It did occur to some that there were a disproportionate amount of foreigners coming to the seminary. But since we were told that they were coming to serve the Church in Guam, most figured 'no problem'.*

*"The RMS folks had many interesting things to say about themselves in their 2010 self-congratulating publication. They speak of the growth of the number of seminarians as if there really was growth of the number of seminarians. There wasn't. There was only growth in the number of seminarians Archbishop Apuron was importing via Kiko Arguello's worldwide vocation machine. But on paper, it didn't matter where they came from, Archbishop Apuron could take the credit for "producing" vocations even though he was only importing them, a sort of 'ready mix' vocations mixture.*

*"Still the Catholics of Guam did not complain, even though they were being taxed ever more heavily for the support of this growing neo-migrant population. The people of Guam are naturally welcoming and they are quite used to welcoming foreign priests to the island.*

*"However, this was a little different. No, a lot different. The priests who had come to Guam over the last 400 years of Guam's Catholic history were already priests, trained, formed, educated, ordained, and prepared to go to the ends of the earth.*

*"The guys Archbishop Apuron has been bringing in are not trained, formed, educated, ordained, or prepared to go anywhere or do anything. The people of Guam would have to provide for their training, formation, education, preparation, and ordination.*

*"Still the people did not complain even though we had no idea how many there were that we paid for who simply went home or went elsewhere. Nor did we ask why Guam had 20 times more seminarians per Catholic than dioceses like Boston or Newark (which tells us we are taking in seminarians who are not wanted elsewhere). Nor did they ask if these men had been psychologically-screened, academically-qualified, or vocationally-assessed as would be required of anyone entering a seminary and aspiring to the priesthood. We didn't ask any of those questions because we trusted Archbishop Apuron.*

*"Another funny little entry from the self-congratulating 2010 publication is the myth that the Accion Hotel property was acquired for free: 'When God gives, He gives abundantly! Imagine, a property worth millions acquired by the diocese for free!'*

*"Just because the property was acquired without the Archdiocese having to fork over its own money does NOT mean it was acquired for free. Many people spent many hours, days, weeks, and months, working to acquire the property. And then after that, hundreds of thousands of dollars and thousands of hours were spent turning the former hotel property into a seminary.*

*“In the matter of the acquisition, the money was given to the Archdiocese by a stateside donor who was located through the hard work of a local nun. The money was given on two conditions:*

- that the gift be used to purchase a defunct hotel property for the ‘purpose of a Seminary’; and*
- that the identity of the donor NOT be made known.*

*“Archbishop Apuron violated both conditions. Amazingly he publicly named the donor, and the money was not used for the ‘purpose of a seminary’, at least not for the Archdiocese of Agana as we shall see.*

*“The RMS happily took our money for the better part of 15 years, but then in July of 2013, something happened.*

*“As we all know, Fr. Paul Gofigan was kicked out of Santa Barbara parish, but he was also kicked out of his post as vocations director. In his care at that time was a young man named June Valencia who was aspiring to the diocesan priesthood and wished to attend a seminary in California as most of the other diocesan priests here in Guam had done before.*

*Archbishop Apuron refused to send him to California and insisted that if he wanted to be a priest in the Archdiocese of Agana, he must attend the RMS. However, as everyone already knew, the RMS was a neocatechumenal seminary and June desired a traditional diocesan formation.<sup>4 5 6</sup>*

*During this debate, I decided to check out the Articles of Incorporation for the RMS<sup>7</sup> and read clear as day in Article III: ‘The purpose of the Corporation shall be to establish and conduct a House of formation to prepare men for the priesthood for the new evangelization following the life and practice of the Neocatechumenal Way.’ This was never actually stated.*

*“The 2010 RMS publication congratulating itself only referenced the seminary as ‘diocesan and missionary’, which, as already explained, did not raise any flags. But here we have a constituting document stating that the purpose of the RMS is to ‘prepare men for the priesthood . . . **following the life and practice of the Neocatechumenal Way.**’*

*“Archbishop Apuron was giving June Valencia NO OPTION to be any other kind of priest other than a neo-priest. No other diocese in the world forces its men to be neo-priests. Neo-seminaries, where they exist, exist alongside regular diocesan seminaries, and for the most part, neo-seminarians are required to take their studies at a traditional diocesan seminary.*

*“However, in the Archdiocese of Agana, not only is it the other way around, the Archbishop permitted NO OTHER OPTION. We know this to be absolutely true because of what Fr. Richard Kidd was told by the Chancellor, Fr. Adrian Cristobal, when Fr. Richard was trying to get sponsored to a real seminary. Fr. Adrian told Richard: ‘In this archdiocese, the diocesan priesthood is no more. Anyone who wants to be a priest must go through the Neocatechumenal Way.’*

*“And then I decided to make something else public, Article IX, which gives Giuseppe Gennarini and his wife, Claudia, a New Jersey couple, 50% of the decision-making power for ‘the most important affairs’ of the seminary. And what are the ‘most important affairs’ of the seminary: The formation of priests.*

*“The other 50% of the decision-making power is divided between Archbishop Apuron and a neo-priest who doesn't live here. So Archbishop Apuron only has 25% of the decision-making power over who becomes a priest and who doesn't. That's dangerous. Two lay people and a priest who have nothing to do with Guam get to decide who is going to be a priest FOR Guam. So not only was the RMS **never** a diocesan seminary as we were told, it's not even ours. 75% of it is controlled by people from somewhere else, who along with Archbishop Apuron, their only goal is to grow the Neocatechumenal Way whether we like it or not.*

*“So how much has this cost us? The spread<sup>8</sup> in the ‘U Matuna’ promoting the most recent annual appeal stated that it costs nearly One Million dollars a year to run the RMS. The Archdiocese of Agana, meaning the Chancery, puts up 10% of that and the rest is said to be funded through gifts and fundraisers. Given that the annual Seminary Gala is the seminary's major fundraiser, and that the Gala is attended and funded by Guam Catholics, we have no reason not to believe that the better part of those gifts and money raised through fundraisers comes from the PEOPLE of the Archdiocese of Agana.*

*“So given that the seminary is 15 years old, and allowing for increasing expenses over that period, it is not unreasonable to believe that the people of Guam have coughed up close to Ten Million Dollars over the last 15 years to support a seminary because we were told it was ours. Amazingly, as if to say, ‘Oh no, we've been found out!’ Archbishop Apuron, after I made these revelations last year, announced<sup>9</sup> in December of 2013 ‘that he has decided to erect a diocesan seminary for Guam.’ For 15 years we did not have a ‘diocesan seminary for Guam’ when we were told that we did?*

*“Obviously the erection of a ‘diocesan seminary for Guam’ is a BIG admission that the RMS is NOT a ‘diocesan seminary for Guam’, even under the guise of its being ‘both diocesan and missionary’ as the 2010 self-congratulating publication stated.*

*"So, by the erection of this other seminary, Archbishop Apuron is admitting that the RMS is NOT 'diocesan' in any way shape or form otherwise there would be no need to erect a 'diocesan seminary for Guam.' Of course, we knew that about the RMS already. Their formation is so completely neo-catechumenal that their products stumble and bumble through a simple Mass. And those that eventually get the hang of it, clearly show their preference for their separate 'celebrations' with their small communities. We can't blame them. They did not sign up to be parish priests. They signed up to be neo-catechumenal presbyters.*

*"But Archbishop Apuron needed to perpetuate the ruse that the RMS was a diocesan seminary (vocations are the currency of clerical advancement), so he ordained them and made them fill the traditional role of a diocesan priest even though not only are they NOT formed for the diocesan priesthood, they are actually taught that parish-based Catholicism is dead.*

*"Now back to Junee Valencia. There would be a separate seminary for Junee—the 'seminary' in Malojloj. Except that it wasn't a seminary. It was an abandoned monastery. And Junee would be made to sleep and eat there while his RMS counterparts wined, dined, lounged and slept in the palatial former hotel after having sucked up nearly ten million dollars from faithful Guam Catholics. And while he would live and eat apart, Junee still had no other option other than to take his classes with the neo's at the neo-seminary.*

*"And the same is true of the other 4 men who recently joined Junee in his Malojloj boarding house. Almost a year later (this week), the new 'seminary' was finally officially 'erected.' But despite all the hoopla, off the record, while he said all the right things about the seminary in public, Archbishop Apuron referred to the seminary as something 'they wanted,' meaning of course it is not something 'he wanted.' These men did not want an old monastery to sleep in. They want an authentic formation for the diocesan priesthood, and an 'erection' does not a seminary make, especially now that we see who you put in charge of it: three un-incardinated priests (who you can control or tell to get out).*

*"Msgr. Arroyo, who is nice enough but not in a position health-wise to take on any more duties (though he will always do your bidding), and the infamous Fr. Adrian who is the one who lied for you to Aaron Quitugua<sup>10</sup> about his not being able to attend a real diocesan seminary.*

*"How sad that the erection of this boarding house is just another lie made necessary by the exposure of the first lie which was that the RMS was not what the Archbishop said it was.*

*"The sad part is that some on our side are buying this new lie and giving Archbishop Apuron the cover he needs. We must stop the ruse. Stop the charade. Stop hurting real vocations. These men should be sent to St.*

*Peter Chanel, the regional seminary for the episcopal conference to which the Archdiocese of Agana belongs and where they can have real courses with real teachers and not the junket-happy professors they get at the RMS.*

*"Oh, and by the way, 'You're Welcome'". End of Post*

As a postscript, we must question why young men from Guam who desire to serve the Archdiocese of Agana in the diocesan priesthood are NOT sent to St. Peter Chanel<sup>11</sup>, the regional seminary for the episcopal conference to which Guam belongs, and of which, Archbishop Apuron has served as its president.

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Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> "To be a priest in the Archdiocese of Agana." Tim Rohr. JungleWatch. August 23, 2013.  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/2013/08/tobepriestinarchdioceseofagana.html>

<sup>2</sup> "I regret to inform you." Tim Rohr. JungleWatch. February 24, 2014.  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/2014/02/iregrettoinformyouthatyour.html>

<sup>3</sup> "A Miracle for Guam". Guam Pacific Daily News. Special Sections. 2010.  
<http://www.guampdn.com/guampublishing/specialsections/evangelization/pg1.html>

<sup>4</sup> "The Chancery vs. Gofigan Update". Tim Rohr. JungleWatch. July 27, 2013.  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/2013/07/theapurongofiganaffairupdate72713.html>

<sup>5</sup> "To be a priest in the Archdiocese of Agana." Tim Rohr. JungleWatch. August 23, 2013.  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/2013/08/tobepriestinarchdioceseofagana.html>

<sup>6</sup> "Why Junee must live apart." Tim Rohr. JungleWatch. November 29, 2013.  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/2013/11/whyjuneemustliveapart.html>

<sup>7</sup> Articles of Incorporation. Redemptoris Mater House of Formation.  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/236374235/RMSArticlesofIncorporation>

<sup>8</sup> 2014 Archdiocesan Annual Appeal.  
<http://www.aganaarch.org/2014archdiocesanannualappeal/>

<sup>9</sup> "A new diocesan seminary for Guam". Umatuna. December 15, 2013.  
<http://www.aganaarch.org/2014archdiocesanannualappeal/>

<sup>10</sup> "I regret to inform you." Tim Rohr. JungleWatch. February 24, 2014.  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/2014/02/iregrettoinformyouthatyou.html>

<sup>11</sup> "Don't be suckered again." Tim Rohr. JungleWatch. October 17, 2014.

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### **C. On the Matter of the Conveyance or Assignment of Title to Real Property to the Redemptoris Mater Seminary**

Submitted by Tim Rohr  
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Upon request of CCOG, Inc.  
because of his extensive research into this matter  
(Edited for this Report)

*December 27, 2014, Hagatna, Guam*

Did Archbishop Anthony Apuron convey, transfer, assign, alienate or otherwise compromise the title or control of the “Old Accion Hotel Property” located in Yona, Guam (Yona Property) to its current occupant, Redemptoris Mater House of Formation and in so doing violate both church law and the trust of members of this diocese by worsening “the patrimonial condition” of the Archdiocese of Agana (Can. 1295)?

#### **--The Facts**

Sometime in 2011, Archbishop Apuron appears to have been approached by the leadership of the Neocatechumenal Way (Gennarini, et al.) about signing over the title to the Yona Property to the Redemptoris Mater Seminary (RMS).

*(Note: Giuseppe Gennarini and his wife, Claudia Gennarini, are said to be both the chief catechists and “responsibles” for the Neocatechumenal Way in the United States and the Pacific. Both are listed as “guarantors” in the RMS Articles of Corporation.)*

We know this because of a letter<sup>1</sup> dated September 8, 2011, addressed to Fr. Pablo Ponce Rodriguez, Rector, The Redemptoris Mater House of Formation, from Richard J. Untalan, then president of the Archdiocesan Finance Council (AFC). In the letter, Mr. Untalan writes:

***“The matter of the transfer of the title to the property on which the Seminary is located and situated has come before the Archdiocesan Finance Council, as it involves the alienation of the patrimony of the Archdiocese of Agana. The request before us is that title of the property be conveyed and transferred to the Redemptoris Mater House of Formation, Archdiocese of Agana, a Guam non-profit corporation. Upon review and consideration, the Archdiocesan Finance Council has denied the request that the title be conveyed to the Redemptoris Mater House of Formation.”***

Two months after Richard Untalan wrote to Fr. Rodriguez, Archbishop Apuron wrote to Richard Untalan<sup>2</sup>:

***“After having consulted with the Reverend Monsignor David C. Quitugua, Vicar General and Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese of Agana, regarding the matter presented to the Archdiocesan Finance Council regarding the supposed ‘alienation’ of the property where the Redemptoris Mater Seminary and the Theological Institute ‘Blessed Diego Luis de San Vitores’ affiliated to the Pontifical Lateran University have their See, I wish to specify precisely that, probably due to a lack of knowledge of Canon Law, it was erroneously understood as ‘alienation’.***

***“The matter is clearly not ‘alienation,’ but simply an assigning of the title of a property that is transferred and renamed from one public juridic person subject to the Ordinary to another public juridic person subject to the same Ordinary.***

***“The Title holder then doesn't change at all because it remains the same Ordinary, whereas the assignment qualifies the subject regarding its use and, consequently, renders the property subject to rights, duties and obligations, including maintenance.***

***“In addition, canons 1256, 1257 and 1276 remove any doubt that the supreme authority of the said juridic person is the Archbishop.***

***“Furthermore, the Seminary is canonically a public juridic person (canon 238) subject in toto to the jurisdiction of the Ordinary. Also, from a civil point of view, the Seminary is a Corporation Sole in which the Sole member is the Ordinary with absolute powers who remains, in any case, the exclusive hold of the Title to the Property.”***

One would think that Archbishop Apuron would have FIRST consulted the Vicar General to make sure that all canonical matters for the transfer of the title were in order. In fact, he probably did.

The most likely scenario, given what we know about Gennarini's control of Archbishop Apuron and this archdiocese in general, Archbishop Apuron probably reported back to Mr. Gennarini about the AFC's refusal to transfer the title to RMS, and Mr. Gennarini either wrote or dictated the outline of the above letter. As Archbishop Apuron should have done (but did not because he probably knew what the answer would be), Mr. Untalan sent the Archbishop's letter to Atty. Ed Terlaje, the archdiocesan legal counsel, for an opinion.

On November 27, 2011, Atty. Terlaje wrote:

***“Read your letter and that of the archbishop. As you well know, ‘alienation’ and ‘assignment’ are words of distinction without a difference. Any documents containing these words would place a huge cloud on title to real property which would result in a protracted litigation and prohibitive cost to remove such cloud. Do you really want to risk title to the property conservatively valued at 75 million dollars? I have other serious concerns***



***raised in the letter, and if you wish, would like to discuss in private with you and other members of the finance council.<sup>3</sup>***

Having received the legal counsel's opinion, Mr. Untalan called for a meeting of the AFC on December 6, 2011. On the agenda, as Item #5, was the title issue.

Archbishop Apuron, who was off-island at the time, wrote to Mr. Untalan, instructing him to take Item #5 off the agenda. Mr. Untalan complied and Item #5 is taken off the agenda.

However, the Vicar General, Msgr. David C. Quitugua, on the morning of the scheduled meeting, sent an email to Mr. Untalan accusing him and the other members of the AFC of as follows:

***"To deny the Archbishop this right, on the one hand, breaks communion with him and, on the other hand, represents a "vulnus" towards the Archbishop insinuating a form of disrespect towards his person."<sup>4</sup>***

Mr. Untalan replied to the Vicar General that he is "stunned" by the his accusation and goes on to explain that Item #5 had been taken off the agenda, that it was not going to be discussed in the Archbishop's absence, and that the vicious accusation by the Vicar General against him and the rest of the AFC was uncalled for. The meeting was cancelled.

Later that day, Archbishop Apuron sent a separate email berating Mr. Untalan saying he is "appalled" at Mr. Untalan's disobedience, reiterating that the issue is not to "be discussed until I come home", and to "stop this nonsense."

Mr. Untalan responds: ***"I am deeply hurt that you would accuse me of disobeying you and that I was creating nonsense . . ."***<sup>5</sup>

On January 11, 2012, Mr. Untalan and the other three members of the AFC who opposed the transfer of title (Msgr. James Benavente, Joseph E. Rivera, and Sr. Mary Stephen Torres, RSM), receive a letter from Archbishop Apuron stating:

***"The term of your appointment has expired and I believe that it is time for me to engage new members in the council...This letter marks the official termination of your membership. Your five year term has already lapsed since your appointment in January 25, 2000 in the archdiocesan finance council."<sup>6</sup>***

In fact, Mr. Untalan's term had "already lapsed" seven years previously. The same was true of the other members whose term had "lapsed". And in the case of Sister Stephen, her term had "lapsed" nearly twenty years previously. It is obvious that Archbishop Apuron's termination of the membership of these four members had NOTHING to do with their terms lapsing and everything to do with standing in Mr. Gennarini's way to get the title to the Yona Property transferred to his control.

However, if it was true what Archbishop Apuron said in his November 16, 2011 letter to Richard Untalan about the property remaining in the control of the Archbishop regardless of who it is assigned to, then why was it necessary to remove the members of the AFC who opposed it?

Answer: Because Archbishop Apuron knows that while RMS may be a corporation sole, it is NOT in the sole control of Archbishop Apuron, as he claims. It is, according to Article X of the RMS Articles of Incorporation<sup>7</sup> in the control of the Board of Guarantors which consists of Archbishop Apuron, a certain Fr. Angelo Pochetti, and Giuseppe and Claudia Gennarini.

In fact, Archbishop Apuron himself recently confirmed that RMS is an entity separate from the Archdiocese of Agana when he stated in Disclosure of Financial Statements of the Archdiocese of Agana<sup>8</sup> as found on the archdiocesan website, that the finances of RMS would be disclosed separately on its own website. Of course the finances were never disclosed.

There is also the very clear reprimand from Archbishop Charles Balvo, the then papal delegate to the Pacific. In a letter dated March 7, 2012, three months after Archbishop Apuron fired the members of the finance council who opposed him, Archbishop Balvo wrote Archbishop Apuron:

***"The establishment of a finance council, diocesan and parish, is required by the Code of Canon Law . . . (the finance council) has a deliberative vote . . . when the diocesan finance council is asked to give its consent, the diocesan bishop is to receive the consent of an absolute majority of those present, and if he acts against this consent he does so invalidly. Regarding the matter at hand . . . consent is required not only from the finance council but also from the college of consultors. If these do not give their consent, the diocesan bishop is not free to do as he pleases."***<sup>9</sup>

There is also the fact that Archbishop Apuron's own archdiocesan legal counsel opined that from a civil point of view, there was NO difference between an alienation and an assignment, as Archbishop Apuron wants us to believe, and that ***"(A)ny documents containing these words would place a huge cloud on title to real property which would result in a protracted litigation and prohibitive cost to remove such cloud."***

Archbishop Apuron is apparently trying to hide his transfer of the control of the Property to RMS (which is really the Neocatechumenal Way) behind church canons, but a civil court will not give a wit about church canons. It is clear that assigning The Property to RMS will cloud the title and make it almost "prohibitive" to retrieve.

So did Archbishop Apuron assign the title to the Yona Property to RMS? Actually, he wouldn't even have to assign "the title", he could simply assign the control of The Property to RMS and it would be of the same effect.

Let's say that he did. If so, he is probably in violation of the following church laws:

***a. Can. 1291. The permission of the authority competent according to the norm of law is required for the valid alienation of goods which constitute by legitimate designation the stable patrimony of a public juridic person and whose value exceeds the sum defined by law.***

***b. Can. 1292 §1. Without prejudice to the prescript of Can. 638, §3, when the value of the goods whose alienation is proposed falls within the minimum and maximum amounts to be defined by the conference of bishops for its own region, the competent authority is determined by the statutes of juridic persons if they are not subject to the diocesan bishop; otherwise, the competent authority is the diocesan bishop with the consent of the finance council, the college of consultors, and those concerned. The diocesan bishop himself also needs their consent to alienate the goods of the diocese.***

***c. Can. 1292 §2. The permission of the Holy See is also required for the valid alienation of goods whose value exceeds the maximum amount, goods given to the Church by vow, or goods precious for artistic or historical reasons.***

Recalling that according to the archdiocesan legal counsel, under civil statute "alienation" and "assignment" are "... words of distinction without a difference . . .", and in matters of title to real property the archdiocese is subject to civil statute, not just church law, thus even an assignment of title or control of the property constitutes an alienation and Archbishop Apuron CANNOT canonically do so without:

1. the consent of the finance council;
2. the consent of the college of consultors;
3. those concerned (which could be all of us); and
4. permission of the Holy See because the value "exceeds the maximum amount" (one million).

In addition, since the value of the real property "exceeds the maximum amount", any manipulation of the title to the property or its control is subject to the following:

***Can. 1293 §1. The alienation of goods whose value exceeds the defined minimum amount also requires the following:***

- 1) a just cause, such as urgent necessity, evident advantage, piety, charity, or some other grave pastoral reason;***

***2) a written appraisal by experts of the asset to be alienated.***

***Can. 1293 §2. Other precautions prescribed by legitimate authority are also to be observed to avoid harm to the Church.***

***Can. 1294 §1. An asset ordinarily must not be alienated for a price less than that indicated in the appraisal.***

***Can. 1294 §2. The money received from the alienation is either to be invested carefully for the advantage of the Church or to be expended prudently according to the purposes of the alienation.***

Lastly, there is this:

***Can. 1295. The requirements of Can. 1291,1294, to which the statutes of juridic persons must also conform, must be observed not only in alienation but also in any transaction which can worsen the patrimonial condition of a juridic person.***

According to this canon, there does not even have to be an "alienation" of title, but simply "any transaction which can worsen the patrimonial condition of a juridic person", and certainly the assignment of control of the Yona Property to any other entity that is NOT the Archdiocese of Agana (and RMS is not), will certainly "worsen the patrimonial condition" of this archdiocese. On a real level, it would be a shame if Archbishop Apuron gave away a property valued at 75 Million Dollars while individual parishes and schools struggle to stay alive and parishioners and parents dig deep to keep those parishes and schools afloat.

We beg the Apostolic Visitors to find out the truth. If in fact, Archbishop Apuron has "worsened the patrimonial condition" of this archdiocese in any real estate transaction with the Neocrat-controlled RMS, he should be REMOVED immediately.

However, sadly, removing him won't give us the property back if it has indeed been assigned. If he has given control of the property to RMS (under the control of the Gennarinis) then there is nothing the Apostolic Visitors can civilly do about it. It is, as Atty. Terlaje warned, under "a huge cloud on title to real property" and will "result in a protracted litigation and prohibitive cost to remove such cloud."

The matter is so serious that even if Rome is able to discover that Archbishop Apuron has violated our trust and alienated a huge portion of our archdiocesan patrimony and in fact disciplines Archbishop Apuron or even removes him, the Catholics of Guam may well pursue a civil suit against the Archbishop, for, according to the laws of Guam, a corporation sole functions as a trustee, and we, the Catholics of Guam are the beneficiaries.

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Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Letter from Mr. Richard Untalan, president of the Archdiocesan Finance Council of the Archdiocese of Agana, to Fr. Pablo Ponce Rodriguez, Rector, Redemptoris Mater House of Formation.  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251151110/RichardUntalanlettertoFrRodriguez>

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Archbishop Apuron to Richard Untalan. November 16, 2011.  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/251155159/ApurontoUntalanNov112011>

<sup>3</sup>See Richard Untalan for documentation.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid

<sup>6</sup>Ibid

<sup>7</sup>Articles of Incorporation. Redemptoris Mater House of Formation.  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/236374235/RMSArticlesofIncorporation>

<sup>8</sup>Disclosure of Financial Statements of the Archdiocese of Agana  
<http://www.aganaarch.org/7965/disclosureoffinancialstatementsofthearchdioceseofagana/>

<sup>9</sup>Letter from Archbishop Charles Balvo, Apostolic Delegate to the Pacific, to Archbishop Apuron. March 7, 2014.  
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/237432703/ApuronBalvotoApuronMarch72012>

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**--A Post Script**

Why does Gennarini, et al. want title to the property? Mr. Gennarini knows that Archbishop Apuron will only hold his office for a short time longer, whether it be due to age, health, or Rome. In fact, Archbishop Apuron was said to have said to some members of the finance council: **"They think I'm going to die"**, as the reason for the request from Gennarini et al. to transfer the title. Well, yes, Archbishop Apuron is "going to die", but do we see him transferring the title to every parish and school to its current occupants? Do we even hear of anyone asking? NO. Why? Because the Archdiocese of Agana is a corporation sole and title to the property will pass to the next occupant of his office. And therein lies the problem.

Gennarini, et al. KNOW that Archbishop Apuron is a unique "gift" to the Neocatechumenal Way. No bishop in the world has been so easily controlled and used by the Neocatechumenal leadership, even going so far as to ordaining men that probably no other bishop would ordain, and even Archbishop Apuron himself is said to have not wanted to ordain. But he obeys their orders.

Gennarini, et al. know that in order to continue their command and control center, otherwise known as the Archdiocese of Agana, they must keep the seminary. Thus by taking control of the title to the property they can tie a successor bishop's hands from evicting them.

This brings us to a related item that we will discuss more in depth later: Some think that the Archbishop's campaign to discredit Msgr. James is just out of jealousy or a desire to control the Cathedral. It isn't.

The Archbishop's campaign against Msgr. James is to discredit him in order to keep him from becoming the next bishop. The Neocatechumenals need a neo-bishop. This is why they brought Fr. Adrian Cristobal back from his self-imposed exile where he had several years to pout over his being passed over for Monsignor.

Archbishop Apuron has little regard for Fr. Adrian, which is why he passed over him in the first place, but Adrian is a Neo, and the Neo-crats need a neo-bishop; thus, the campaign to destroy Msgr. James and the return of Adrian not just to Guam, but to the highest office available at the chancery. Archbishop Apuron is simply following orders.

#### **IV. Heretical Instructions & Pronouncements**

##### **On the Controversy in the Archdiocese of Agana over the Manner in which Holy Communion is Distributed in the Eucharistic Celebrations of the Neocatechumenal Way**

Submitted by Tim Rohr  
[timrohr.guam@gmail.com](mailto:timrohr.guam@gmail.com)

Upon the request of CCOG, Inc.  
because of his extensive research on this matter  
(Edited for this Report)

*December 27, 2014, Hagatna, Guam*

The controversy in the Archdiocese of Agana over the manner in which Holy Communion is distributed in the Eucharistic celebrations of the Neocatechumenal Way (NCW) is no small matter. This is primarily due to Archbishop Apuron's public response to a 2005 directive from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments (CDW).

In December of 2005, in the midst of the "ad experimentum" period granted to the Neocatechumenal Way, Cardinal Francis Arinze, Prefect for the CDW, issued a letter<sup>1</sup> to the leaders of the Neocatechumenal Way beginning with the address: *"The Holy Father wishes you to know. . ."*

In the letter, Cardinal Arinze notes six items of concern relative to the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by the Neocatechumenals. Item 5 reads as follows:

***"5. On the manner of receiving Holy Communion, a period of transition (not exceeding two years) is granted to the Neocatechumenal Way to pass from the widespread manner of receiving Holy Communion in its communities (seated, with a cloth-covered table placed at the center of the church instead of the dedicated altar in the sanctuary) to the normal way in which the entire Church receives Holy Communion. This means that the Neocatechumenal Way must begin to adopt the manner of distributing the Body and Blood of Christ that is provided in the liturgical books."***

Only a few weeks later, speaking on the Archdiocese of Agana radio station (KOLG 90.9 FM), Archbishop Apuron publicly challenged Cardinal Arinze's authority to issue the directive, saying:

***"Arinze, to tell you the truth, is really not for the Way, and I don't know what credentials he has, I mean I don't want to get into an argument in terms of an individual but Cardinal Arinze, with due respect, uh, I, you know uh, I don't know why he uh uh wants us to conform to what...and you know the ... "*** (He then changes the subject.)<sup>2</sup>

This might have been seen as an error or a small slip up except that it occurred in the context of the 40-minute long address in which Archbishop Apuron defends the Neocatechumenal Way in terms of "we" and "us" (categorically identifying himself with the NCW apart from the rest of the diocese) and goes so far as to cast Cardinal Arinze's letter as an historically unique permission for the NCW to continue its practices:

***"... in fact, really looking at the letter, mostly, beside the interpretation of the two columnists...it is the first time in the history of the church that we were give permissions for the variations that is being done in the Neocatechumenal Way, officially by the pope."***<sup>3</sup>

The program, which at the time was aired live every Monday morning, was normally rebroadcast in the afternoon of the same day and twice more, later in the week. Word quickly got out about the Archbishop's statements and many were waiting for the rebroadcast to hear for themselves what was a very obvious taking of sides by Archbishop Apuron, not just against those of us who are not members of the NCW, but against the legitimate authority of the Church (the CDW). The rebroadcast never came. Realizing the full impact of the Archbishop's scandalous remarks, the show's producers decided not to rebroadcast the episode. However, they did not initially announce why.

Angry listeners began calling the station asking the technician on duty why the program was not being rebroadcast. The technician simply told the callers what he was told: "I don't know, they just told me not to run it." (The technician was my son).

The next day a meeting was called by Deacon Frank Tenorio, the manager of the station. The object of the meeting was to come up with a statement that could be released explaining why the program with the Archbishop's damaging remarks was not being rebroadcast. With the Archbishop present, Deacon Tenorio proposed that we blame it on "technical difficulties." The show's hosts, Fr. Michael Crisostomo and Mr. Fred Rodriguez, (and others) were present at the meeting. Everyone seemed shocked into stillness. Deacon Tenorio, in front of the Archbishop, had just proposed a lie. There was no protest from Archbishop Apuron. Apparently he was content that we lie for him.

After a long moment, I called it a lie. Again, no response from the Archbishop. Finally, Fr. Crisostomo proposed something benign that was at least not a lie. This episode would have long been forgotten except for Archbishop Apuron's continued campaign to advance the Neocatechumenal agenda in this diocese, a campaign he actually began in Rome in 2005 at the Synod on the Eucharist where in front of Pope Benedict XVI and the rest of the synod fathers, he proudly advocated for the anomalous liturgical practices of the NCW.

Here is an excerpt from a report by the "Catholic News Service":

***"Archbishop Anthony Sablan Apuron of Agana, Guam, said perhaps 'the church needs to restore the 'breadness' of the bread, by using the unleavened bread used in the ancient and primitive church rather than the wafer-thin, mass-produced bread we use as hosts for our people today.'***

***"He said using signs that 'fully and powerfully represent the reality they signify and not just approximate them' might lead the faithful to 'better appreciate' the Eucharist.***

***"He said in his experience small faith communities more successfully grasped the faith. In order to foster that sense of a close community, he suggested the priest take the Eucharist to seated people.***

***"What sort of a banquet does one go to which requires you to stand rather than sit?" Archbishop Apuron asked. He said that in the Gospels, St. Mark said 'Christ served the apostles he did not ask or invite them to come up' in order to receive his body and blood. The archbishop praised the Neocatechumenal Way in Guam and said he has witnessed 'a remarkable growth in faith in the lives of thousands of people' who are part of this parish-based process of faith formation."<sup>4</sup>***

In another news report, Archbishop Apuron is said to have . . .

***"asked that the practice of receiving communion while seated be extended, because 'if the Eucharist is a banquet, then this is the most appropriate posture.'"*<sup>5</sup>**



*(Note: Archbishop Apuron's belief that the Eucharist "is a banquet", is based in Kiko Arguello's theology of the Eucharist as solely a banquet to the exclusion of it being a Holy Sacrifice).*

Archbishop Apuron personally bragged about his comments at the synod during the above mentioned radio program on KOLG:

***"... as you know, it was made public that I argued first of all for the kiss of peace to be moved, or at least the possibility of having to move the kiss of peace at before the offertory after the homily, before moving into the liturgy of the eucharist as is done in the eastern church. And that's what separates us from the eastern church but it had been the much earlier practice of the church in the primitive church, the receiving communion seated. My argument, and in front of the pope and the bishops there..."***<sup>6</sup>

Thus, we can be assured, given his public statements in Rome to the pope himself, that the KOLG incident was NOT a "slip up", and that Archbishop Apuron was in fact, in those statements on KOLG, stating clearly and emphatically that he not only believed that the liturgical inventions of Kiko Arguello, the founder of the NCW, to be "most appropriate", he also, in rejecting Rome's authority on the matter, was publicly embracing an alternative hierarchy.

This "alternative hierarchy" has continued to rule Archbishop Apuron to the present day. And while many of us were willing to overlook most of damage that seemed to be mostly occurring around the edges of our church, we could no longer ignore it once Archbishop Apuron began his attack on the very heart of our church with his public persecution and maltreatment of the clergy, first in 2008 when he threatened three priests from the Philippines with an effective deportation should they not serve the NCW,<sup>7</sup> and then again in 2013 and 2014 with his public attacks on Fr. Paul Gofigan<sup>8</sup> and Msgr. James Benavente<sup>9</sup>,

*(Note: Fr. Gofigan, because he stood in the way of the NCW's control of the largest parish on the island, and Msgr. Benavente because he has long been rumored to be Apuron's most likely successor, and not being "Neo", he had to be eliminated).*

In April of 2008, four months after the two year "grace period" given by Cardinal Arinze for the NCW to change its communion practice, and one month prior to the final approval of the Statute of the NCW, I approached a priest, a member of the Neocatechumenal Way and a professor at Guam's Redemptoris Mater Seminary, and asked him why, given the deadline, the NCW had NOT complied with Cardinal Arinze's directive.

I am copying here the full conversation on this issue between this priest, who for the purposes of this post I shall refer to as Fr. X:

*(Note: The priest's name will be supplied in the version submitted directly to the visitors. I do not consider this priest to be the culprit in this matter. He appears to be just the messenger. However,*

*hopefully he has seen how much damage all this has led to. The priest is welcome to identify himself in the comments below if he wishes. Highlights are mine).*

**4/26/08 (from Tim Rohr to Fr. X)**

**“Father, I have spent quite a bit of time compiling questions, but before I submit any of them, perhaps this one needs to be answered first. Has the NCW on Guam obeyed the directive of Pope Benedict XVI as transmitted through Cardinal Arinze's office on December 1, 2005 regarding the reception of Holy Communion:**

***5. On the manner of receiving Holy Communion, a period of transition (not exceeding two years) is granted to the Neocatechumenal Way to pass from the widespread manner of receiving Holy Communion in its communities (seated, with a cloth-covered table placed at the center of the church instead of the dedicated altar in the sanctuary) to the normal way in which the entire Church receives Holy Communion. This means that the Neocatechumenal Way must begin to adopt the manner of distributing the Body and Blood of Christ that is provided in the liturgical books.***

**“The two year transition period expired as of Dec 1, 2007. However, every person in the NCW that I have asked about this says that they still receive Holy Communion according to the way described above from which the NCW was instructed to depart. Has the NCW been granted an extension of the time allotted?**

**If so, I would encourage you to make it known so that the rest of Guam's Catholics are not scandalized by what appears to be disobedience. Or, is it that just some communities have not gotten the word? Or, is it that some communities are not in line with the full authority of the Church? Is this something that the bishop himself can decide? If so, then that should be made known. As I've said before, whatever Rome is okay with I am okay with. I have no issue with anything that Rome allows regardless of my personal preferences. We just need to know the real story. As it looks now, the NCW is not obedient and appears to be making its own rules. I think this question needs to be dealt with first. Thank you, Tim”**

**4/26/08 (from Fr. X to Tim Rohr)**

**“Dear Tim: An extension has been granted. The reason for this is that the statutes that will be definitively approved have a modification of the instructions contained in the letter from Cardinal Arinze. These statutes were to have been approved to coincide with the end of the two year period mentioned in the Cardinal's letter, but other issues regarding the statutes have been raised by one of the departments of the Roman Curia. Kiko asked the Council of the Laity, which oversees the NCW, what should be done, and he was instructed by the Cardinal Prefect of the**

**Council to continue the present practice until the statutes are completed. We are still waiting. Fr. X"**

**4/26/08 (from Tim Rohr to Fr. X)**

**"Then this needs to be made known. I will be happy to do my part in getting the word out so that the opponents of the Way no longer use this as part of their evidence against the Way. Can you please supply a copy of the instruction from the Cardinal Prefect? Thank you, Tim"**

**4/26/08 (from Fr. X to Tim Rohr)**

**"Tim: Kiko spoke to Cardinal Rylko, the head of the Council for the Laity, back in December when the two year transitional period ran out. Both Kiko and Cardinal Rylko knew that the statutes would contain a modification of Cardinal Arinze's instructions. Rylko gave an oral reply to Kiko to maintain the present practice so that the Holy See would not be put in the awkward position of seeming to change its mind by going from Arinze's letter to the new statutes in a very short time.**

**"The pope approved the statutes in the beginning of February and they were to be promulgated on February 27th. But just before the promulgation, the statutes were removed from the hands of the Council of the Laity and sent back for further considerations by the other four dicasteries of the Curia that have to review any changes in the statutes. We were just told to hold tight until you receive further word. No explanations were given at the time. There is, however, evidently still some strong resistance to the statutes on the part of some in the Curia and they are trying to introduce further changes. However, there are no documents to show you at this point. All our instructions have been oral, but we are satisfied with that. We have no choice.**

**"All we were told is to take no action until the Holy See resolves these matters. This is what we are doing.**

**However, I hope you understand that this information is not for publication. I share it with you so that you will understand the delicate position we are in at the moment. I would caution against reading into these events more what I have said. I mention them simply to show that we are not disregarding Arinze's letter, but that subsequent events have changed the situation in which we find ourselves. Fr. X"**

**4/27/08 (from Tim Rohr to Fr. X)**

**"Okay, I won't pass this on. However, I must say that it does seem odd that a change or abatement of a directive coming from such a high office as that of the Congregation for Divine Worship, and also one that made so much news upon its release, and one that affects the worship of over 1 million Catholics (the estimated pop. of the NCW) and the**

observations of many millions more (those aware of the directive but not in the NCW), could be left to just a conversation between Kiko and the Cardinal. While I have no reason to doubt what you say is true, the potential for scandal is huge. Also, the Pope very clearly reinforced the directive from the CDW in his address to the NCW on Jan. 12, 2006.

“It is hard to believe that this Pope, perhaps the clearest thinker on the planet, would change his mind. Also, the fact that the practice is still in place even now shows that the directive that came out over two years was completely ignored. The NCW was not given 2 years to continue its practice, but 2 years to change it.

“Obviously no effort was made to change it. I also understand that one of the contingencies for the approval of the statutes is an investigation into ‘how fully the Neocatechumenal Way has adhered to the norms issued in December 2005 by the Congregation for Divine Worship’. Why is there any need to investigate your obedience in this matter if in fact the approval of the statutes is going to include a retraction of the directive???

“I have to say that on a personal level your answer is a great discouragement. My issue is not with you, but with the continued mystery that seems to shroud more and more aspects of the NCW. I think for now, due to my increasing skepticism about the NCW, it will be wise of me to no longer engage in any attempt at dialogue or reconciliation between the NCW and those that are openly hostile to it. I will wait in silence for Rome to speak. Thank you for your time. Tim”

4/27/08 (from Fr. X to Tim Rohr)

“Dear Tim: All of the directions contained in Cardinal Arinze's letter have already been put into practice. The only exception is the manner of receiving communion. There are some practical problems due to the type of bread that we use. We will the expressed direction of the Roman Missal which says that the bread should look like bread. Hosts may be used as a second option if circumstances render it more feasible. As a matter of practice, all parishes that I am ware of do not even attempt the preferred form because of the difficulties attached to it. Arinze's letter presupposes the use of hosts as does the mode of distribution envisioned in his letter.

“Kiko was granted an audience with the Pope in May, 2007, and discussed the issue. Kiko proposed an alternative method which would meet these problems and which the Pope then accepted. The statutes, which incorporate the other provisions of Arinze's letter, were then amended to reflect this modification. The fact that the statutes have been delayed is most unfortunate. I trust their publication will go a long way to remove any suspicions. Fr. X”

4/28/08 (from Tim Rohr to Fr. X)

**“Okay, I’ll wait. Tim”<sup>10</sup>**

So as you can see, the 01 December 2005 directive from the CDW was NEVER obeyed, and as per this email conversation with Fr. X, the permission is said to have come from Cardinal Rylko.

The question is whether or not Cardinal Rylko, if in fact this account is true, has the authority to overrule the 01 December 2005 directive from the CDW, and if so, why is there no documentation of this decision from Cardinal Rylko?

According to Fr. X, all the instructions are “oral”. This is not the way Rome operates especially in matters regarding the celebration of the Eucharist. Of course, the main context of Fr. X’s comments is the pending approval of the Statute in which it appears he is assured the NCW will continue to be permitted to receive communion sitting.

The Statute received final approval two months after this conversation (in June 2008), and there was NO permission to continue the Neocatechumenal practice of receiving Holy Communion seated.

Specifically Article 13 § 3 states:

***“For the celebration of the Eucharist in the small communities the approved liturgical books of the Roman Rite are followed, with the exception of the explicit concessions from the Holy See.<sup>49</sup> Regarding the distribution of Holy Communion under the two species, the Neo-Catechumens receive it standing, remaining at their place.”***

Footnote 49 is copied as follows with my comments in italics:

**See Benedict XVI, Speech to the Neocatechumenal Communities on January 12, 2006, in Notitiae 41 (2005), 554–556.**

*(In this address, Pope Benedict emphasizes that the 01 December 2005 instruction from the CDW was issued on his behalf).*

*CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP, Letter of December 1, 2005 in Notitiae 41 (2005), 563–565; (This is the letter from Cardinal Arinze instructing the Neocatechumenals to cease the practice of receiving Holy Communion while seated).*

**“Notification of the Congregation for Divine Worship on celebrations in groups of the Neocatechumenal Way,” “L’Osservatore Romano”, December 24, 1988: “The Congregation consents that among the adaptations foreseen by the instruction “Actio Pastoralis”, nn. 611, the groups of the above-mentioned “Way” may receive communion under two**

**species, always with unleavened bread, and transfer “ad experimentum” the Rite of Peace to after the Prayer of the Faithful.”**

Statute of the Neocatechumenal Way – Final Approved Text – June 2008.<sup>11</sup> To summarize, the 2008 Statute of the Neocatechumenal Way provides for the following exceptions:

1. The communicants may receive communion under two species.
2. The communicants may receive the sacred species remaining in their place standing (not sitting).
3. The Rite of Peace may be transferred to after the Prayer of the Faithful.

However, relative to the manner in which Holy Communion is distributed in the Neocatechumenal celebration of the eucharist in the small communities, this is the practice to this day in the Archdiocese of Agana:

1. The celebrant, prior to his own communion, distributes the sacred host to the communicants who stand, remaining in their place.
2. The communicants do not consume the sacred host but continue to hold it.
3. The communicants wait till the sacred host has been distributed to all.
4. They then sit, still holding the sacred host.
5. The celebrant himself then returns to his chair, holds up the sacred host, says “Behold the Lamb of God...”, and communicates himself.
6. The communicants, seated, then consume the sacred host.

Absent public permission from the Holy See, there are two major transgressions of the liturgical books:

1. The priest has moved his own communion until after he has distributed the sacred host to the communicants.
2. The communicants do not consume the sacred host upon receiving as required in the GIRM par. 161, but sit and then later consume.

On December 15, 2014, Archbishop Apuron publicly stated that Rome has given permission for these exceptions:

***“Rome has approved it – even the way we’re receiving Communion. That they receive the host standing and they can sit down and everybody who receives it and they eat together, as the Priest stands and says, “Behold the Lamb of God . . .” you know, the acclamation before and they receive it sitting down. Rome has given permission for that. And it’s somewhere I need to find out where exactly, but they told us that permission is given.”<sup>12</sup>***

We now ask the present Visitors from the Holy See, to clarify once and for all whether or not “Rome has approved it.” If Rome has approved it, then we simply ask that said approval be properly made known so this ongoing scandal can be stopped.

If Rome has not approved it, then we simply asked that the practice itself be stopped and that the instruction be made public.

### **--Conclusion**

While the manner of distributing Holy Communion in the Neocatechumenal community celebrations of the eucharist versus the rest of the local church is an outward sign of our division, we believe that the obstinance to the Holy See in this matter and as documented above, underlines a much more dangerous division, a division of belief in what the Holy Eucharist in fact is.

We even must wonder whether or not our new Neocatechumenal presbyters and even our own Archbishop believe the same thing the rest of us believe about the Real Presence: That Jesus Christ is ACTUALLY present, body, blood, soul and divinity, and not just MYSTERIOUSLY present in the community, as many Neocatechumenals have intimated.

Further, Archbishop Apuron often evidences what many of us frighteningly suspect: That he no longer has a mind of his own, that he simply parrots what he is told to say, that he is under the control of his Neocatechumenal masters, specifically Fr. Pius Sammut, O.C.D., who is ever at his side and to whom Archbishop Apuron seems to submit every word and decision, and more specifically (and dangerously) Mr. Giuseppe Gennarini, the chief "catechist" and "responsible" for the United States and the Pacific.

I make this observation in a general way because over these many years, Archbishop Apuron's actions against the larger Church do not make sense even if we account for the possibility of Archbishop Apuron being a "bad man", but I also make this observation specifically because much of what Archbishop Apuron says relative to the Neocatechumenal Way can be traced almost word for word to his Neocatechumenal masters.

As an illustration, consider a statement by Archbishop Apuron already referenced:

***“... in fact, really looking at the letter, mostly, beside the interpretation of the two columnists . . . it is the first time in the history of the church that we were***

***given permissions for the variations that is being done in the Neocatechumenal Way, officially by the pope."*<sup>13</sup>**

Now consider what Giuseppe Gennarini told the news agency, "Zenit" only a few days earlier on January 1, 2006:

***"For the first time, the Holy See has accepted several variations to the way the Eucharist is celebrated within the context of the Neocatechumenal Way, as licit adaptations . . . To the best of my knowledge, this is the only case in which the Holy See has granted such an explicit permission to an ecclesial group."*<sup>14</sup>**

Sadly, we find this kind of parroting all too often in Archbishop Apuron's words, but exponentially more dangerous is his robotic obedience to Gennarini et. al. in the administrative decisions of this archdiocese, specifically his firing of Fr. Paul Gofigan and Msgr. James Benavente, but most dangerous of all, his ordaining of men from Redemptoris Mater Seminary even he himself knows should not be ordained.

We trust you will learn all this for yourselves.

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Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Letter from Cardinal Francis Arinze, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments. Prot. 2520/03/L. Vatican City, December 1, 2005. To the esteemed Mr. Kiko Argüello, Ms. Carmen Hernandez, and Rev. Father Mario Pezzi.  
<http://www.internetica.it/neocatecumenali/english/arinzeletterinterview.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Archbishop Anthony S. Apuron. KOLG, 90.9 FM, Catholic Educational Radio, Agana, Guam. January 2006.  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/2014/02/bywhatauthority.html>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Glatz, Carol. "Eucharistic adoration is key, but also has drawbacks, bishops say." Catholic News Service. October 6, 2005.  
<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0505663.htm>

<sup>5</sup>Magister, Sandro. "Liturgy: Benedict XVI Brings the Neocatechumenals Back to the Right Way." Chiesa News. December 27, 2005.  
<http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/44140?eng=y>

<sup>6</sup>Archbishop Anthony S. Apuron. KOLG, 90.9 FM, Catholic Educational Radio, Agana, Guam. January 2006.  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/2014/02/bywhatauthority.html>

<sup>7</sup>Apuron, Anthony. Letters to Frs. Hector Canyon, Manuel (Jun) Trenchera, Jr., Manuel Ombao. March 28, 2008.



<https://www.scribd.com/doc/234271730/Apuron2008Letterstothe3FilipinoPriestseditd>

<sup>8</sup>Rohr, Tim. "The Removal of Fr. Paul Gofigan". JungleWatch.info  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/p/documentsrelativetocase1.html>

<sup>9</sup>Rohr, Tim. Posts relative to the removal of Msgr. James Benavente.  
JungleWatch.info  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/search/label/Msgr.%20James%20Benavente>

<sup>10</sup>Rohr, Tim, X, Fr. X. Email conversation. April 2008.

<sup>11</sup>Statute of the Neocatechumenal Way – Final Approved Text – June 2008  
[http://www.camminoneocatecumenale.it/public/file/en\\_Statute2008.pdf](http://www.camminoneocatecumenale.it/public/file/en_Statute2008.pdf)

<sup>12</sup>Apuron, Archbishop Anthony S., Address to the parishioners of St. Francis Parish, Yona, Guam. December 15, 2014.  
<https://soundcloud.com/undecoverneo/tanakaquestionandaasaansweronneocommunion>

13 Archbishop Anthony S. Apuron. KOLG, 90.9 FM, Catholic Educational Radio, Agana, Guam. January 2006.  
<http://www.junglewatch.info/2014/02/bywhatauthority.html>

14 Neo-Catechumenate on the Holy See's Guidelines. Interview With Giuseppe Gennarini. Zenit. January 01, 2006.  
<http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/neocatechumenateontheholyseesguidelines>

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## *Epilogue*

The purpose of this disquisition is to bring to the forefront serious matters of flawed leadership emanating from the Chancery, which is causing a division among the Catholics on Guam. Many are questioning the rift among the clergy who are members of the Neocatechumenal Way and those who are not. Archbishop Apuron is perceived by the people to be favoring the members of the Neocatechumenal Way and neglecting all others not part of the movement.

There seems to be underlying motives as to why Archbishop Anthony Apuron; the Vicar General, Monsignor David Quitugua; and the Chancellor, Father Adrian Cristobal of the Archdiocese of Agana are engaging in such acts contrary to how one should shepherd his Flock to protect and nourish them with the Good News.

What is evident from the matters discussed above is the cavalier attitude of the leadership of our Church on Guam to deliberately misinform and misguide the Faithful on Guam; coldly defame certain members of the clergy and run the affairs of the Archdiocese unilaterally, disregarding tenets of Canon Law.

It is with sincere sadness that such a major problem has disrupted the harmony and tranquility of the Catholic Faithful on Guam and in the region.

CCOG has taken it upon itself to be an active voice for the laity to help restore the good practices of our Church community before the Neocatechumenal Way and its leadership were introduced to Guam.

Pope Francis has admonished his bishops to be in and amongst the people they shepherd. To understand them and lead them well, saving their lives and souls for God. CCOG agrees with this and whole-heartedly desire a Shepherd of the Flock on Guam who takes these words of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, to heart.

Yours in Christ, Jesus, Our Lord and Savior,

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